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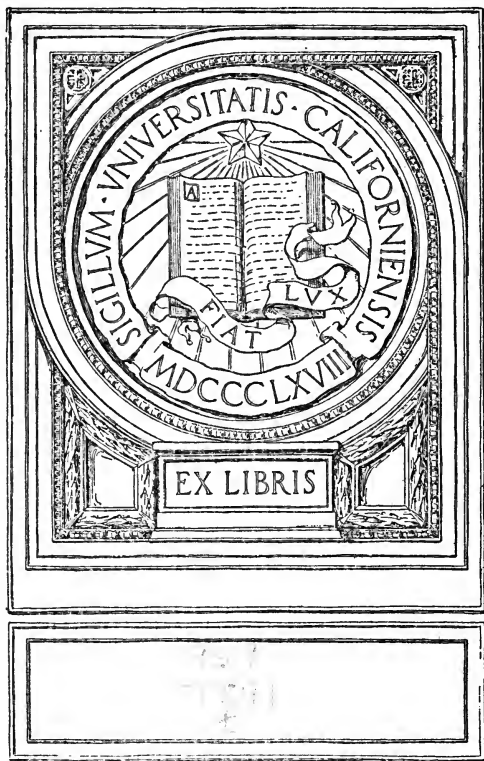


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THERE AND HERE

By
ALLEN TUCKER

ALVMNVS BOOK FVND





THERE AND HERE

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BY
ALLEN TUCKER



NEW YORK
DUFFIELD AND COMPANY

1919

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THE
LIFE OF
ALLEN TUCKER

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The author wishes to extend his thanks for permission to reprint certain verses to the Editors of *Scribner's Magazine*, *Vanity Fair*, *The Dial*, *The Churchman* and *The New York Times*.

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THERE AND HERE

FLAGS

BATTLEFIELD OF THE MARNE, THE YEAR AFTER

Flags in the field,
Flags, flags and flags,
Blowing straight out in the bright wind,
Blowing straight out over the green graves,
Blowing straight out by the white crosses.
The fields rest;
The sheep graze;
The birds fly yellow into the level sun;
And the flags, the flags blow straight out,
Blue, white and red,
Straight to the East,
Straight against the foe,
Gay, free and fierce,
With the terrible defiance of the dead.



A CRUCIFIX

BATTLEFIELD OF THE MARNE

Beauty was everywhere,
The moon was round through it,
The night enveloped it,
The trees waved silently into it,
The air was thick with it,
The ground was pale in it,
The new graves were covered by it.
And there on the cross
Hung the Son of God.
And I asked, "Why,
Why, O God, must suffering
And sin and anguish be in the world?"
There was no answer.
But there on the cross
Hung the Son of God,
And Beauty was everywhere.

THE END OF APRIL

When on a blue, pale night in coming spring,
The little leaves are breathing to the stars,
The crescent moon with burning tips hangs in the
tender sky,
The world enveloped by enchantment
Seems dipped in beauty.
I see the wonder and amazing mystery of it all,
Then suddenly I feel the terror,
And wish that I could die.

VERDUN

France indomitable,
Holding, holding,
Holding the Pass to Beauty
Against the wolves of the world.

France magnificent,
Wounded, wounded,
Lighting with her flaming spirit
A beacon for the nations.

The wolves,
The hungry wolves,
With jaws adrip,
Seeking to destroy,
Come on.

And France,
Fighting France,
Kilis and kills.

But tney come and come,
For it is a nation of wolves,
A whole people,
Bent on the destruction of Beauty,
On the enslavement of the world.
But France, imperishable,
Holds.

And the wolves beaten backward,
Know that they cannot pass,

Know in their darkened hearts,
That France,
Sweet France,
Has, with the terrible strength of her steadfast soul,
Saved Beauty,
Saved Beauty for the world.

“THERE IS NO PEACE”

A June morning in Connecticut,
The summer wind is blowing through the green,
The gentle green of waving maple leaves,
The garden path is full of peonies,
And above the sky is blue.

Into my sense why should there come the smell
Of wounded soldiers, crowded in a train?
Among the moving leaves why should I see
The worn, inquiring eyes of dying men?
For above the sky is blue.

SEPTEMBER

I wonder why, on a splendid day,
When a wind has swept the world,
While the shadows fly across the hills,
Like great blue flags unfurled.

I wonder why, when the hills stand up
Clean and strong and clear,
As if just fresh from the mint of God,
That death should seem so near.

CHEMIN DES DAMES

Two blackened, swollen things that once were men,
Dressed in the clothing of the Prussian Guard,
With dreadful heads awry under their iron pots,
And hands still clutching at the empty air,
Lie rotting in a hole,
A muddy hole made by a giant shell.
While down the road a little way
Passes a nun,
Her face illumined by the inward smile
That comes of perfect peace,
Carrying in her two hands some dull pink flowers,
A pot of mauve chrysanthemums.
The paper clean in which the pot is wrapped,
Making upon her flat black dress
A triangle of palest white,
Shining through the growing dusk.

LIFE IS A STRIVING

Life is a striving, struggling splendour,
Life is a bitter, passionate refrain,
Life is a sacrifice and worship,
Life is the thing called happiness and pain.

Life is a rushing, star-lit terror,
Life is a hoping on with every breath,
Life when it reaches its completest glory
Men name Death.

THE CHRISTMAS RAID

LONDON

The night is cold,
The curving moon hangs low,
She rocks her babe,
And sings the song of Peace,
Of Peace on earth,
For it is Christmastide.

A whistle sounds,
Another down the street,
A cannon fires,
Again, again,
Faster, faster,
Above a war-plane throbs,
Louder, louder,
Nearer, nearer,
Sudden, the house leaps back,
A great noise splits the world,
A blinding light,
The affrighted house—shakes—stands.
Then all is still,
And very dark.
The babe lies dead,
Killed even in the encircling mother's arms.
While up above,
Between the glistening stars,
The angels sing,
Sing on in spite of war,
Peace, peace on earth,
To men of gentle will.

CANDLES

Tall they stand, the candles,
Tall and thin and very white,
Each one with its quiet flame,
Small, bright and very sharp,
In the enormous gloom,
The enclosed infinity of Notre Dame.

The candles burn,
Burn to God, for the repose of the souls
Of the splendid dead.

About the altar,
The altar where rests the spirit of God,
Are the flags;

The battle flags,
Red, white and blue,
Orange, green or deepest black,
Crosses, stripes or shining stars,
Flags and symbols of us all.

There are the flags,
The terrible flags,
Hanging so still, so very still,
In the enveloped space
Of the high, uplifted nave.

Steadily burn the candles,
Slowly, calmly, brightly burn,
Flaming upward toward God,
Asking for peace for the souls
Of the warrior dead,
Who gave their lives that love might always live.

WESTWARD

High are the white clouds,
High piled up are the aqueous hills,
Into the clear sky,
Into the clean sky,
Into the blue, blue sky of home.

ON A LINE OF SAPPHO

My soul is shaken,
Torn apart by Eros,
Eros the terrible,
Smites me to my knees,
Even as the north wind,
Roaring on the mountain,
Falls upon and smashes
The great oak trees.

THE 367TH INFANTRY

"THE BUFFALOES"

The town is white,
The snow is softly falling,
Down the street, between the waiting crowds, they
 come,
The Buffaloes,
The Black Regiment.
The band ahead,
Thumping, crashing,
Booming, smashing,
As "Onward, Christian Soldiers" fills the air.
Black are the lines,
All splendid black,
Beneath the sharp bayonets,
Under the high waving flags;
A long way they have marched,
Down the long years they have come,
Through suffering and despair,
From Africa to Manhattan,
From slavery to freedom,
Men—citizens at last,
No masters, no protectors,
Owning themselves,
Saving themselves,
Marching, marching,
Rank on rank,
Black, all black,
Marching, marching,
Over the soft-lying snow,

Marching, marching,
Black, all black,
Amidst the pale falling snow.
Africa here!
Embattled,
Free!
Now ready to fight for us,
Now ready to fight with us,
Ready to fight for themselves,
Ready to fight,
Ready to die,
For Freedom.

A MARCH GALE

A great wind tears the poplar trees,
With a sound like strident harps;
The trees bending, swaying, soaring,
Driven by pain and dreadful fear.
The wind roaring, raging, crashing,
With a noise like moving fire.
The poplars, beautiful in the evening light,
The little branches licking out like running flame,
Filled with the glory of the streaming sun,
Bright with the wonder of the world.
The wind shrieking, shouting, screaming,
Like a living thing gone mad;
While in my heart, understanding;
The wild world at last in tune with my warring,
darkened soul.

LES REVENANTES

Ghostlike, tenuous,
In the moonlight,
Delicate are the birch trees,
So pale in the April night;
Gleaming white,
Shining white,
Intensely white,
Rising against the dark-blue sky,
Lifting into the waiting sky;
Tall in the moonlight,
Fine in the moonlight,
Exquisite in the moonlight;
Seeming like a pure rebirth,
As if they were the lovely souls,
Come back again to earth,
Of the long lost "neiges d'antan."

AWAKE

Awake in the black night; dark.
Darkness everywhere,
Engulfing the world,
Invading and filling even the little room,
Surrounding the bed,
Darkness that frightens,
No sight, only darkness and the sound of wind.

While the body, stiffly still,
Trying, trying,
The anxious mind,
Thinking, thinking,
Contradicts,
Turning, turning,
Over and over,
To and fro,
Never ending,
Fighting the impossible.

The only sound, the dreadful wind crawling through
the trees
Like unseen gliding ghosts with singing streaming
hair,
Whispering, writhing,
Hinting, haunting,
In and out among the leaves,
Now soft, now strong,
Now low, now loud,

Fiercely shrieking, dying down,
Then softly slipping off the edges of the leaves,
The wind slides into the dark;
Even the wild wind swallowed at last
By the dreadful, impenetrable, everlasting dark.

A MAGICIAN

With tubes of paint,
Or empty words,
He speaks unspoken things;
The flight of birds;
How stars at daybreak faint;
A woman's eyes;
A child's caress;
Or how love surely makes
A wilderness
Seem like a glad surprise.

A BRANCH

At daybreak
The maple leaves are like stars,
Waving stars,
Fluttering stars,
Awakening with a sigh.

At midday
The maple leaves are like stars,
Hosts of stars,
Glorious stars,
Against the azure sky.

At sundown
The maple leaves are like stars,
Service stars,
Gold on the dusk,
Emblems of those who die.

SECOND BATTLE OF THE MARNE

By the banks of the Marne,
Under the ragged flags,
In the green graves,
The dead slept.
Again was heard the sound of war,
Clarions, clarions, clarions,
Calling, calling, calling,
And the rolling drums.
The dead stirred.
And now the noise of guns,
Roaring, rending, breaking,
Coming ever nearer,
Again the German guns.
The dead stirred.
Then from the clarions
Sudden the piercing cry,
"Aux armes, citoyens!"
The dead uprose.
The spirits and souls of the soldier dead;
From the little lonely graves,
From the great crowded graves,
The gallant ghosts arose,
Free, clear, serenely gay,
The spirits rose and fought again for France.
In the air,
Through the ranks,
With the guns,
Everywhere,
Invisible, intangible, impalpable, indestructible.

Under the flag they had died to save,
Defending friends and brothers,
Helping, guarding, quickening
The men of the New World;
And when victory was won,
Once more in their quiet graves, the dead slept.

“LES FLEURS DU MAL”

From the battlefield,
From the ground upturned, overturned,
Blasted, ruined, defiled,
Grow flowers;
Strange flowers,
Flowers hitherto unseen,
Flowers never known before,
Flowers dreadful, unearthly.

In the deep shell holes,
Among the unexploded bombs,
Twisting about the broken wire,
From beneath the half-buried corpses,
Creep flowers;
Flowers of horror,
Some noxious, spotted grey,
With dripping, loathsome lips;
Some a cruel, dusty red,
With bloated, purple veins;
Some thin, slimy black
Rank with the odour of the lost;
Ghastly flowers,
Flowers of hell,
Fit only for nosegays for the damned,
Flowers that frighten one to see.
But beyond,
For Beauty never dies,
Bloom masses of blue,

Blue incredible, unbelievable,
Sweet, unutterably sweet,
Star shaped,
With the piercing blueness
That grows only from the heart of love.

A JULY NIGHT

Darkness,
Quietness,
And the smell of heavy summer.
The hillside slipping away into the dark;
No beginning, no ending,
Only darkness;
Enfolding,
Calming,
Protecting
The slow breathing, sleeping earth.
A great tree, a mass of vague, quivering darkness,
Lifts itself into the silent air.
Above and all around, the wide sky,
Dark with a blueness that is like a cry to the heart.
Far down, a large glowing star,
All about the enormous dome, brilliant stars,
While soaring up across the arch of the curving blue,
The pale fluorescence,
The infinite wonder,
Called the Milky Way.

FIFES

Fifes!

The war note of the tramping infantry.

High, high, high,

Above the rolling reverberating drums

The melody sings clear,

Clear as the song of the brilliant birds of war.

Shrilling the fifes,

With the powerful rhythm of the marching feet;

Thrilling the fifes,

As the sound of swift maddened bayonets;

Whirling the fifes,

As the scream of infuriated steel.

High, high, high,

Stabbing the ears,

Drilling into the peaceful world,

The wild call to fight.

LA ARGENTINA

The guitars begin,
The syncopated Spanish rhythm,
The curtain parts,
With whirring of the castanets,
She comes,
La Argentina.
Moving slowly
To the music,
With the music,
In the music.
With the rolling castanets,
Waving, swaying,
The music visible,
Running through her form.
With the rising and the rattling of the castanets,
She moves,
Faster,
Fiercer,
Lifting into power,
Until passion and beauty and the force of life are
manifest.
Then crash; the castanets!
She stops, still.
Silence—
She slowly smiles.
For with her art
She has torn the world asunder,
And they see;

She has ripped the shell of commonplace,
And they know.

Silence—

Till the everyday creeps back again
With thunders of applause.

GUNS

In the soft autumn sunshine,
By the trees of the little park,
Stand the captured guns;
Prussian guns;
Long, thin and brown,
The crown and pride of Prussia
Upon them deeply cut.
At last they are ours,
At last they are here.
For evil days they had murdered,
For frightful months they had ruined,
For dread years they had destroyed;
And we believed not.
For a long time they had roared at us,
For a great while they had jeered at us,
For many years they had reviled us;
And we stirred not.
But at last the strength of the people
Broke through their leaders' bonds,
And we made war,
Red, fierce, avenging war;
And we fought and took the guns,
Tore them from the beasts that served them,
And brought them back.
Now here they stand
In the little park,
Forever for a sign that in this people
There is still a passion for the right.

GIVE ME ONCE MORE

Give me once more the torn-up trampled years,
Let me fly forward to the past.

Give me the time when I throbbed with bitter joy,
The days when youth made triumph out of pain,
The nights when from the trembling sky I tore the
very stars;

Give them to me; give back my broken stars.
Dull are the perfect jewels of to-day,
Give back my shattered stars of long ago.

A SHADOW

When the leaves fall, gently, quietly, relentlessly,
And on an autumn morning you watch the shadow
 of a branch,
Made by the low-angled sun, upon a whitewashed
 wall,
Watch the blue shadow steal softly down the glow-
 ing white,
You think, "How swiftly turns the world to-day,
How soon it all will pass, and we like shadows will
 also disappear."

NOVEMBER THE ELEVENTH

Victory, flowers, glory eternal,
Cheers, rejoicing, peace enflamed,
Think of the ones to whom we owe it,
Think of the maimed.

With the sky all blue, and the sun all golden,
Voices roaring like sound of wind,
Think of the men who must live in darkness,
Think of the blind.

Flags and banners, tossing triumphant,
Streets streaming with colour, blue, white and red,
Think of those who gave this to us,
Think of the dead.

THE PROCESSION OF THE DEAD

"Unter den Linden," and the tramp of noiseless
ghosts,

The parade of the army of the dead,
Music, music like the sighing of the frightened air,
Under the quivering trees in the empty, silent
street,

Comes the long procession.

Ghosts, ranks of ghosts,

Divisions, armies,

Impalpable, intangible, transparent;

Soldiers, soldiers, soldiers,

Men who died in battle;

Old men and hostages

The murdered ones;

Women and lovely girls,

With scars around their outraged breasts;

Children, little children,

With red 'wounded wrists;

Martyrs, crucified ones,

Nurses, doctors,

Killed at their gentle work;

Edith Cavell,

Pale, white, translucent.

Then the drowned ones,

From the great dead ships,

Lusitania, Suffolk, Leinster;

Sailors, sailors, sailors,

Fighting men,

Merchantmen,

Fisher men,

Shot, drowned, betrayed.
Captain Fryatt,
Calm and steadfast as when on earth.
Thousands, thousands,
All nations, all peoples,
Marching,
Under the floating flags,
Back from the other world,
Ghosts, spectres, spirits;
A long, long procession;
The parade of the men who won,
The parade of the women who gave,
The parade of the noble, glorious dead
Who gave their lives for right, for hope, for love;
Proud they are,
Proud and understanding;
Now comprehending all mysteries, all suffering,
Now knowing their victory is achieved,
Now sure they did not die in vain,
Now certain that the living kept the faith,
Sure of the living,
Glad of the sacrifice.
Ghosts, ghosts, ghosts,
Conquering, triumphant, victorious,
Tramping, silently, noiselessly,
"Unter den Linden."

THE RETURN

When I returned,
And coming up the stair,
It all was changed,
The very air breathed joy,
The place seemed filled with light,
I felt the uplifting of the buoyant world,
And all was peace.
Then I knew that she was surely there,
That in the room above she would be waiting.

ADVICE

Speak calmly,
Never say
The stars are made of molten gold,
And if you reach you hold them in your hand:
Do not think
That the sky is liquid sapphire,
And if you dream you spread it o'er your soul:
Never say
The sea sounds like the orchestra of God,
And if you care you hear it in your heart.
Speak gently,
Say that life is sweet,
Never tell them
Life is the bitter, splendid thing it is,
A thing of suffering and heart-rending joy:
Speak softly,
Pretend that love is a pleasant thing:
Never dare to say
Love is a driving scourge,
A blinding beauty,
A flame from which there is no escape:
Say to them
That death is merciful and comes to all alike:
Never even whisper
That death swings through the world,
Dealing grief and horror and oblivion:
Speak smoothly,
And you will be admired.

BACK

Back again in the village store,
In civilian clothes now dressed,
Gold stripes for service and for wounds,
Ribbons upon his gallant breast.
His sharp, grey eyes seem to survey
The serried ranks of armed men,
You almost hear the quick command,
"Fix bayonets, charge, and charge again!"
Instead he makes some jokes
While telling the price of beans
Or quoting the cost of eggs;
One for a moment chokes,
As if one saw a lion in a cage,
And then one slowly understands,
He is the same brave, steadfast man
Who stood the test and broke the German rage.

A PLAYTHING

When one has died
Whom you have honoured, loved;
While even in your grief
You slowly count
His honours, his accomplishments,
What things he made,
What he had done,
How lived, how played his part,
You find, perhaps, upon his desk,
Some little thing, some silly toy,
That almost breaks your heart.

THE ADAMS MEMORIAL

ROCK CREEK CEMETERY

Enwrapped in heavy folds,
It sits impenetrable,
Brooding,
Pondering the eternal mystery
That now we know as life,
And soon shall know as death.
Close to the path,
Beyond the gaunt, bare, lifting trees,
Appears the first blossom
Of the sure returning spring;
While in the dusk floats the double moon,
The new moon holding in the bright, upcurving arms
The transparent perfect circle of the dead, still
sphere;
And above through the onmarching dark
The shining of the everliving stars.

THE POILU AND THE POLITICIAN

Bitter pain; heavy labour,
Wounds and suffering,
Toilsome days,
Years spent face to face with awful death.
At the end
He carries home his share
Of the thanks the regiment received
In General Order, number ten.

The other visits camps,
Exhorts men to keep clean their souls,
Wears at times the gallant uniform,
Appears on platforms,
And, standing amid palms and bankèd flowers,
Speaks of liberty and sacrifice.
For him, with formal pomp,
The grand cross of the Legion of Honor.

“LES BARRICADES MYSTÉRIEUSES”

The houses heavy, menacing,
Black, overtopping, crushing,
The street straight,
Leading out to the clear world beyond,
The houses narrowing, threatening,
Oppressing, dulling, obliterating.
I will flee away,
Away from the pressure and the pain
Of the dark and dreadful city.
Other people ahead
Pass up the street, out and away.
I, too, will depart.
I move swiftly,
The houses reaching to crush me,
The city trying to hold me.
The world is beyond,
Light, open, marvelous.
So I run,
Swiftly, swiftly up the street.
Suddenly I am stopped,
Across the straight street
Is stretched a barricade,
High, mysterious, impassable.
I try to pass.
I cannot.
I must return.
I seek, I find another street,
I run up it toward the light,
But again across the vacant street
Stretches a ghostly barricade.

Street after street I try,
And each one closes relentlessly, horribly,
The barricades rising,
Grewsome, ghastly, incredible.
I try to climb,
To tear down the hateful piles,
To break out, to escape.
I cannot.
I fall back with bloody hands,
Cut on the jagged stones,
Torn by the cruel nails,
The barricades,
Mysterious, inscrutable,
Of strength overwhelming,
Stop me;
Pressing me back,
Holding me in,
Forcing me to remain,
Preventing me from reaching out,
Keeping me from going forth,
To the wonderful open land,
To the land beyond,
Where blows the wide wind,
Where shines forever the dazzling sun.

NARCISSUS ON THE TABLE

Rising from the round grey dish,
The straight green stalks
And leaves like little sharp swords,
Springing to defend the crown of yellow blossoms,
Blooming out,
Sweet and gay,
Like the cries of joyous soaring birds.

AGAIN

The little plants are pushing, pushing,
The little leaves are reaching, reaching,
Striving toward the sun;
For the sap behind that is all unseen
Is urging, urging,
Moving them on;
Till the earth again is green,
A delicate green,
A shimmering green,
Like sunlit sheen;
And the leaves come out,
While round about
Is the song of blithesome birds.
And the wind is soft,
And the sun is bright,
And life is full,
Full once again
Of the old delight,
The wonder and the marvel,
The world turning toward the light.
The flowers are gay,
We, too, must play,
For it is spring, spring,
So let us bring
Our newest and our best,
And shout and sing,
And leap and dance,
For it is meet
That we our presents bring
And lay them at God's feet.

LIFE

Turn "Number Six,"
The house is dark,
Save that at the wings
Glistens a round of shining light;
Into this light
Quietly glides a figure,
Gay, rose coloured,
Dancing, stepping, sliding,
Floating in a foam of waving white;
Brightly moving to the rhythm
Of the soft playing band;
The centre of the stage is reached,
Held for a single space
Of pulsing, quivering victory;
A smile, a bow,
Then, suddenly again,
Darkness.

LARKSPUR

Clear as the song of the bird that gives it its name
the larkspur blooms.

Wonderful is the blue of the sea, in flood about
yellow rocks;

Delicate are thin shadows, on the exquisite white-
ness of snow;

Moving are far blue hills, floating beyond a valley
of gold;

Marvelous above dark and pointed trees, the high
Italian sky;

Poignant the quivering twilight, behind the blazing
city lights;

But the blue of a deep flower,

Lit by the newly rested sun,

Or the pale azure of a blossom

At dusk of a summer's day

Seem the most beautiful of all.

NO. 721. DEPARTMENT OF GOTHIC ART

Once I stood,
Uplifted, enshrined,
While the people prayed,
"Ave Maria, ora pro nobis."
Vivid candle flames
Pierced the darkened coloured air,
Incense rose in pale spirals about my haloed head,
And the priests intoned,
"Salve Regina, mater misericordia."
Then was my robe bright with colour,
Heavy gems were in the broidered stone;
Then the people cried,
"O dulcis Virgo Maria."
Worshipping through me the Blessed Virgin,
I was carved to represent.
Carved was I
By hands skilled,
By heart moved,
By head bowed
In understanding and worship,
The feeling for God and beauty
Throbbing into the reluctant stone,
Until I shone forth
Instinct with art and life,
Dedicated to the glory and wonder of the Mother
of Almighty God,
"Gaude Virgo Gloriosa,
Ave Maria, Ave! Ave!"
But now, in a corner of a bare museum must I
remain,

The colour from my surging vestments washed
By Puritans, jealous of this gay and gladsome world;
I stand, stared at, appraised,
A visitor may say "the line is good,
It is of a period when fineness ruled."
Coldness, blindness, nothingness,
Indeed I am alone.

Only now and then comes one who loves,
Loves through his eyes,
All art, all beauty
Of earth, of works of man, of God,
Perceiving, and receiving,
The essential, the significant,
And he shakes before me, as a tree blown upon
by summer air,
Understanding the oneness of the heart of man
with God;
And I hear again, as if sung by distant angels,
"Salve Regina,
Gaude Virgo Gloriosa."

THE 77TH DIVISION

Bayonets!

The fierce foam on the stream that fills Fifth Avenue.
White!

Glittering above the waves of sweeping brown.

Flags!

Waving, flying, glorious, over the red tanned faces.

Bands!

Roaring ragtime with the rattling happy drums.

Flowers!

Thrown to the troops by the waiting women who
love them.

Boys!

Our own boys, back again, victors, conquerors.

Manhattan!

Her own sons, who worked for her, fought for her.

Visions!

Of the dead who stayed for us in France.

Bayonets! Bayonets!

Gleaming above the rhythmic mass,

As the Liberty Division streams in glory, home.



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